

MINUTES OF MEETING
State Board of Education
April 10-11, 2003

The April meeting of the Board of Education was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cedar Rapids in conjunction with the annual meeting of the AEA Governing Boards. Board members Gene Vincent, Sally Frudden, James Billings, Sister Jude Fitzpatrick, Gregory McClain, Mary Jean Montgomery, Don Roby and Kay Wagner were present. Also present were Department director Ted Stilwill, Gail Sullivan, Judy Jeffrey, Jan Friedel, Kathi Slaughter, Carol Greta, Beverlee Adams and Janet Rovholm, *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*.

President Vincent called the meeting to order.

The April 10-11, 2003 revised agenda was approved with an amendment to correct the time on item 6 from 2 a.m. to 2 p.m..

COMMUNICATION

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Board Reports

Kay Wagner indicated she attended Senator Maggie Tinsman's education committee meeting where AEA legislative issues were discussed.

Don Roby reported the visit to College Community Schools demonstrated many new facets of technology under good leadership. After talking with staff in the district, he felt there needed to be continuing staff development to keep everyone current with the newest technology.

Mary Jean Montgomery reported she had attended the Iowa Public Television Board meeting. Their priority was rethinking new ways to do business. She indicated that Iowa Public Television was beginning the move into the high definition conversion hinging on appropriations and time.

Montgomery also gave an update on her attendance at the NASBE Emerging Issues Task Force meeting. Only six states were invited to be a part of this group. They

are Colorado, Maryland, Ohio, Maine, Texas and Iowa. The goal of this task force is to get in on the cutting edge of issues that education is facing and help to prepare NASBE in getting ahead of the curve on helping state boards of education. Ms. Montgomery handed out a list of issues of initial concern to this group. She asked the Board members to review and comment

Jim Billings - No report.

Sally Frudden – No report.

Sister Jude Fitzpatrick indicated she had attended the Postsecondary High School Coordinating Council meeting and was pleased as a newcomer to see that the represented groups were pledging to support each other and promote the needs of each individual group. She also reported the Council has a new chair, Dr. David Skorton, President, University of Iowa.

Greg McClain reported he had given an NCLB presentation. He also noted he would be participating in a NASBE audit committee meeting by teleconference.

McClain felt he had a good site visit to College Community School District, visiting math and science classes and the counseling office. He had also visited the SUCCESS center and a study hall. He commented he was impressed with what he saw, the students engaged in their classes and with teachers and he observed quiet study halls.

Gene Vincent gave an update on the student member process for selecting a student member of the State Board. He said the Board subcommittee had met and that three finalists had been selected and their names sent to the Governor for final appointment. Vincent indicated the candidates had outstanding qualifications. Ms. Montgomery commented that she felt the essays written by the students were remarkable.

Director Report

Director Stilwill indicated he appreciated the support of the Board on the rural school conversation. He had had a good dialogue with superintendents from schools of less than 100. Districts had asked for assistance with their strategic planning on this issue.

Stilwill reported that he would be addressing various issues on the Board agenda as they appeared in sequence.

Greg McClain asked about the distribution of the Focus on High School Report that had been presented at the March meeting. Stilwill said a letter about the report had been emailed to education stakeholders across the state with a website link to the

report for easy access. He also indicated it was the topic on the Department's website that had the highest amount of hits last month.

Legislative Update

Director Ted Stilwill reported that there is a shift in thinking for both the state and the legislature and that all issues are now being tied to economic development in the state. Don Roby commented that the Board would want to be a player in this process and suggested that Mike Blouin be invited to dialogue with the Board on education concerns and ideas.

Stilwill said the Department bill has lots of amendments but is still moving through the process. He also indicated that Phase III funding appears to have been eliminated and the AEA conversation is pending. Stilwill indicated he would address the AEA conversation later in the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

The minutes of the March 13-24, 2003 were approved with the following correction:

Change the word present to president on page 1 of the minutes.

Paraeducator Approval

The Generalist Level I paraeducator preparation programs offered by Eastern Iowa Community College District, Muscatine site, for a period of five years were approved as proposed.

Appeal Decisions

Administrative Law Judge, Carol Greta, reviewed the appeal decision In re Peter Carlson. She indicated the Appellants, parents of a high school sophomore, were seeking reversal of the decision of the Waterloo board of education on January 21, 2003, to expel their son for the remainder of the 2002-2003 school year.

Motion: Mary Jean Montgomery moved and Sister Jude Fitzpatrick seconded that the decision of the Waterloo board on January 21, 2003 to expel their son for the remainder of the 2002-2003 school year be affirmed.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Greta also reviewed the appeal decision In re Cody Allen McCleary. She commented the Appellant, an 18-year-old student, was seeking reversal of the

Central Decatur Community School District Board decision on January 13, 2003, to expel him for a period of 12 months.

Mary Jean Montgomery felt this decision should be used as a teaching tool for school districts. Carol Greta told the Board she had written an article in regard to this decision and it had been distributed in the last superintendent's letter.

Motion: Sally Frudden moved and Jim Billings seconded to remand the decision of the Board of Directors of the Decatur Community School District made on January 13, 2003 to expel Cody Allen McCleary.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Greta indicated the motion needed to be restated to remand the decision back to the District for further action consistent with the decision.

Motion: Sally Frudden withdrew the motion and moved that the decision of the Board of Directors of the Decatur Community School District made on January 13, 2003 to expel Cody Allen McCleary be affirmed and remanded to the local board for preparation of a written decision by the board. Jim Billings seconded.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Update on AEA Legislative Proposal and State Board Position Statement

Director Ted Stilwill informed the Board that state lawmakers are discussing measures that would substantially change the way that services from Area Education Agencies would be delivered and, at the same time, substantially reduce funding for those services. He indicated such changes could seriously endanger services to students and to teachers, and because overall efforts to improve student performance could be damaged, he felt the State Board could have grave concerns with regard to these proposals.

Since 1992, the strategic plan for the Board had set as its overall goal: "To improve the level of learning, achievement, and performance of all students so they will become successful members of their community and the workforce." Stilwill felt that Iowa's area education agencies play a vital role in that educational support system, providing essential services that improve student learning; either directly or through sustained professional development programs that improve instruction.

Director Stilwill proposed that the Board discuss and adopt a position statement in support of the area education agencies.

Sally Frudden suggested that more emphasis should be placed on the word "equity" in supporting all the services offered in AEAs. Mary Jean Montgomery felt that the

position statement should be a strong testimony to the value of the area education agencies for the education of children in the state.

Don Roby thought it should be emphasized that the reductions in the Department and the cuts to dollars in school districts would indicate an even greater importance in maintaining the services of area education agencies.

Sister Jude Fitzpatrick concurred and said it is also a time when local school districts, both large and small are struggling as well.

Motion: It was moved by Mary Jean Montgomery and seconded by Kay Wagner that the Board approve the proposed position statement with identified changes in support of the area education agencies.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

No Child Left Behind

Judy Jeffrey, Administrator, Division of Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education, gave an overview of the status of the approval process for Iowa's accountability plan with the U.S. Department of Education. She indicated the Department of Education has submitted an accountability plan for No Child Left Behind. A peer review team had been present in the state on March 10, 2003, to hear evidence from the department. She indicated the USDE will now provide written feedback to the department on the aspects of the plan. Jeffrey felt that the plan might need modification as the department works with the USDE to meet the federal rules and guidelines.

Jeffrey said there are two academic indicators that must be established by a state. The Board has already given approval to submit graduation rate and attendance rate for elementary and middle school as the academic indicators that we would add to our accountability system. She reported that on May 1, 2003 we must submit a consolidated state application and in that plan we need to identify the goals this state has selected as the academic indicators. The following indicators are suggested: 1) graduation rate-selecting a realistic and attainable goal, and 2) attendance rate goal of 95%.

Greg McClain said he would like to see goals established for different subgroups, race ethnicity, etc. for the targets. Montgomery felt the proposal was very on target and thought the groups could be aggregated for the targets. Don Roby asked if the goal could be reset once it was initially set. Sister Jude Fitzpatrick asked if it would be reasonable if in projecting the increase from 90 to 95 to apply a similar percentage of increase to all subgroups and then at least progress would be equal. James Billings indicated the NCLB plan has steps that bring the subgroups along to the 2013 goal.

Judy Jeffrey summarized that the state plan would indicate the 95% target graduation target for 2013-2014 and a 95% average daily attendance target. The department will research what are reasonable goals for the racial/ethnic subgroup.

Motion: It was moved by Mary Jean Montgomery and seconded by Sister Jude Fitzpatrick to approve the proposed graduation and attendance rates contingent on USDE approval of Iowa's plan.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

Jeffrey asked the State Board to consider taking action supporting Iowa's NCLB accountability plan and encourage timely approval by the USDE. A draft position statement was presented to the Board. Discussion about Iowa's approach to testing and accountability followed.

Mary Jean Montgomery emphasized that Iowa absolutely cannot risk converting to high stakes testing.

Motion: It was moved by Mary Jean Montgomery and seconded by Jim Billings that the Board adopt the proposed position statement for a matter of record in support of the NCLB plan for Iowa.

Vote: The motion carried unanimously.

President Vincent adjourned the business meeting at 3:30 p.m.

The Board members participated in a discussion of issues of mutual concern with the members of the AEA Governing Boards. A panel of State Board members and AEA members discussed the role of the AEAs in increasing student achievement.

Friday, April 11

State Board members were hosted by Kirkwood Community College in a discussion of the college programs and partnerships followed by a tour of the college facilities.

The State Board members also joined the AEA Governing Boards in a discussion of legislative concerns at Grant Wood Area Education Agency.

Gene Vincent
President

Ted Stilwill, Director and
Executive Officer

